

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed on September 20, 2006, in which claims 1-20 were rejected, and also in response to the telephone interview conducted with the Examiner on November 7, 2006. With this Amendment, claims 1 and 18 have been amended, claims 2-3 and 19 have been canceled, and claims 21-23 have been added as new claims in the application. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims in view of the above-amendments and the following remarks.

I. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §101

In Section 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Regarding claim 1, the Office Action states that all of the elements claimed could be reasonably interpreted in light of the disclosure by an ordinary artisan as being software alone, and thus is directed to software per se, which is non-statutory. Further, the Office Action suggests that, in order for such a software claim to be statutory, it must be claimed in combination with an appropriate medium and/or hardware to establish a statutory category of invention and enable any functionality to be realized.

In accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, claim 1 has been amended to indicate that the claimed components of the computer system are stored on a tangible medium and therefore rejection should be withdrawn. Claims 2-17 were rejected as incorporating the deficiencies of claim 1 upon which they depend and therefore the amendment to claim 1 also renders claims 2-17 allowable.

Regarding claim 18, the Office Action states that the claim recites a method of retrieving data from a general ledger database to satisfy a generalized request from a report object, but fails to recite a tangible result. Further, the Office Action states that, for a result to be tangible, result data must be stored in some physical medium or displayed to users.

In accordance with the above statements, claim 18 has been amended to indicate that at least a portion of the accessed data is stored on a tangible medium and therefore the rejection should be withdrawn. Claim 19, which is now canceled, and claim 20 were rejected as

incorporating deficiencies of claim 18 upon which they depend and therefore the amendment to claim 18 should render claim 20 allowable.

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

In Section 6 of the Office Action claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Thompson et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,668,253, hereinafter referred to as Thompson.

A. Independent claim 1 and dependent claims 4-17

In the interview conducted on November 7, 2006, the Examiner indicated to the undersigned that claim 1 would be allowable over Thompson if the limitations of claims 2 and 3 were incorporated into claim 1. Therefore, claim 1, which has now been amended to include the limitations of claims 2 and 3, is believed to be allowable. Also, claims 4-17 are believed to be allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from allowable claim 1.

B. Independent claim 18 and dependent claim 20

During the interview conducted on November 7, 2006, the Examiner suggested that, in the original independent claims, the role of the at least one staging table in helping access information from the general ledger database was not sufficiently clear and therefore Thompson, which also includes staging tables, could be very broadly interpreted as teaching the claim elements. With this Amendment, independent claim 18 has been amended, in a manner that is generally similar to claim 1, to clarify the role of the at least one staging table.

Amended claim 18 requires “receiving the generalized request from the report object; accessing, based upon information included in the generalized request, data from the general ledger database; and utilizing at least one staging table, having a standardized structure which is independent of a structure of the general ledger database, to store at least a portion of the accessed data on a tangible medium before it is returned to the report object from the staging table,” which, as discussed in the interview, Thompson does not show. Thus, claim 18 is believed to be allowable. Claim 20 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependency from allowable claim 18.

C. New independent claim 21 and new dependent claims 22 and 23

Claims 21-23 have been added as new claims in the application. Support for these new claims can be found on page 12, line 15, through page 13, line 2, of the Specification, which is included below.

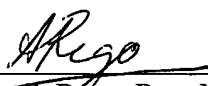
In accordance with the present invention, the retrieved or accessed data is stored in staging table(s) 214 before it is returned to report object 210. Data returned to report object 210 is displayed to the user via designer and viewer 208. In embodiments of the present invention, staging table(s) 214 are temporary tables, which are created, populated and dropped by the execution of one or more of general ledger access methods 212. In other embodiments of the present invention, staging table(s) 214 may be permanent tables that are updated by SQL statements or database functions, which may be activated each time general ledger database 204 is updated. It should be noted that a structure of staging table(s) 214 is independent of (or not tied to) a structure or business rules of any particular general ledger database (such as 204).

As discussed in the interview, Thompson, in general, utilizes staging tables for consolidation of information from multiple financial systems and not for storing information from a single general ledger database. In contrast, claim 21 requires “a uniform interface configured to receive a generalized request from a report object and, based upon information included in the generalized request, access data from at least one staging table that stores information from a single general ledger database on a tangible medium, wherein the at least one staging table has a standardized structure which is independent of a structure of the general ledger database.” (Emphasis Added.) Therefore, claim 21, and claims 22-23, which depend from claim 21, are believed to be allowable over Thompson. Further, claim 23 includes “the permanent staging table is updated by one of SQL statements and database functions, which are activated each time the general ledger database is updated,” which Thompson does not show.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims 1, 4-18 and 20-23. Favorable action upon all claims is solicited.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,
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